PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, The cities of San Antonio, San Marcos, and New Braunfels, the Edwards Underground Water District, and area river authorities have proposed a regional water management plan for the Edwards Aquifer corridor stretching from Kyle to near Brackettville; and

WHEREAS, Despite these plans, controversy continues over the issue of underground and associated surface water management in the region; and

WHEREAS, There are objections to proposed controls on pumpage and to proposed surface water reservoirs contemplated in connection with the regional water management plan; and

WHEREAS, Proponents of the plans, taking the opposite stance, include the Edwards Underground Water District, cities and counties in the region, their chambers of commerce, river authorities, the river recreation industry, and others; and

WHEREAS, This controversy would benefit from dispassionate review at the state level, including the involvement of independent scientific expertise;

NOW, THEREFORE, We, the presiding officers of the Texas Senate and Texas House of Representatives, acting under the authority vested with us by House Concurrent Resolution 142, 71st Legislature, Regular Session, do hereby establish a joint select committee, the Special Committee on the Edwards Aquifer, subject to the directives given below:

1. The committee shall consist of seven senate members appointed by the lieutenant governor and seven house members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives. Attachment A shall identify the committee membership.

2. The committee shall be assigned to:

   (a) review and study scientific data on the Edwards Aquifer from various public agencies, including the Bureau of Economic Geology, the Texas Water Development Board, the Texas Water Commission, the Edwards Underground Water District, and the United States Geological Survey;

   (b) consider priorities for the uses of the Edwards Aquifer, considering its storage capacity, its recharge and retention capabilities, and its ability to transmit water and provide water of high quality;

   (c) explore and suggest alternatives for supplying adequate water for regional needs at reasonable costs;

   (d) determine the effects of limiting groundwater withdrawals from the Edwards Aquifer to an amount less than average annual recharge;

   (e) consider allocation mechanisms for the aquifer;
(f) consider whether amendments to existing water law are needed;

(g) determine the feasibility of pumping to augment or replace springflow for the purpose of meeting downstream needs without waste, the impact on downstream needs, and whether additional studies should be contracted for as funds are available;

(h) examine present institutional arrangements for water resource management in the region of the Edwards Aquifer and hydrologically connected river basins, and examine alternative institutional arrangements;

(i) examine alternative methods of managing the aquifer, with and without imposing limits on pumping;

(j) review the costs, benefits, and feasibility of recharge and other projects, including consideration of fair methods of funding such projects;

(k) review and consider modifications to water rights and policies affecting development of surface water in the western part of the Edwards Aquifer region; and

(l) investigate and make recommendations on any other aspects of groundwater management that, in the judgment of the committee, would be useful to the legislature's decision making.

3. The committee may request the assistance, in the discharge of its duties, of state agencies and offices referenced in item 2(a) above.

4. The committee shall be subject to House Concurrent Resolution 142, 71st Legislature, Regular Session, and to the procedures manual for select committees adopted pursuant thereto.

5. The committee shall issue a report to the legislature and governor in accordance with the requirements of House Concurrent Resolution 142 and shall expire when the 72nd Legislature convenes on January 8, 1991.

William P. Hobby
Lieutenant Governor of Texas

Gib Lewis
Speaker
Texas House of Representatives

DATE APPROVED: 9/26/89

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